

# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

## Supervised Independent Living Placement



### What is a SILP?

A SILP is a placement that you find. You decide where you live and who you live with. There is no caregiver, but it still has to be approved.

### Who are SILPs for?

The SILP is designed for young adults (ages 18 to 21) who are ready to live on their own with limited financial and emotional support. Good candidates for a SILP should be able to:

- 🏠 Pay all their own bills and manage their own money
- 🏠 Find a safe, secure place to live
- 🏠 Be ready to live independently

### How do I choose a SILP?

A lot of places can be SILPs: houses/apartments, dorms, rooms for rent, living with a relative or close friend. When you are deciding, you should consider:

- 🏠 Can you afford the housing after payments stop?
- 🏠 Is the housing safe?
- 🏠 Talk to people you trust about the pros/cons of your options

\*Note: Living with your biological parents is not allowed as a SILP.

### How do I get a SILP approved?

Once you find a place you want to live, there is a two step process:

#### 1) SILP readiness assessment

You and your County Social Worker (CSW) or Deputy Probation Officer (DPO) must complete a readiness assessment to review your strengths and weaknesses in the areas of money management, personal health and safety, and tenant rights and responsibilities.

#### 2) SILP inspection

Once the readiness assessment is done and the CSW/DPO has decided you are “SILP ready,” your proposed living situation must pass a physical safety inspection. The inspection will look at the physical condition of the unit, not the people with whom you live. You must be at the inspection to learn if there are problems that can be fixed.

### How and when do I get my first SILP payment?

You will not get a SILP payment (\$\$) until your housing is inspected and approved. Here's how it works: Once your SILP passes inspection, DCFS will send you the first voucher. You need to write the date you moved into the SILP, sign the voucher and mail it to DCFS on the first day of the next month. After DCFS receives the signed voucher, they will send you a check by the 15th of the month. You will only be paid for the number of days you were in the SILP; so the first payment may vary.

### What happens to payments after the first month?

When you receive the first month's check, you will also receive a voucher for the next month. Confirm that you were in the SILP for the entire month, sign the voucher and mail it to DCFS on the first day of the next month. As long as DCFS receives that voucher by the 5th, you will get a check on the 15th. That cycle repeats every month you are in your SILP. You need to keep your address current with DCFS so they know where to send your check. If you do not receive the monthly check, call the Hotline and ask for a replacement voucher.



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## What can I use my SILP payment for?

This check covers your living expenses, including food, rent, utilities, etc., but it's generally not enough money. To be successful in a SILP, you will probably need a part-time job and/or financial aid.

\*Note: If you are working and/or receiving financial aid, your SILP payment will not be affected if you note that income in your Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP). For example, your TILP should have a goal that states you will "supplement your foster care money with a part-time job."

## Heads Up

Expect your first SILP payment to take 4 to 6 weeks to arrive. If sharing rent or renting a room, make sure your part of the rent is fair so you have money for food and other expenses.

- 🏠 Consider buying used furniture and appliances.
- 🏠 Most rentals require deposits or first and last month's rent before you move in.
- 🏠 Consider the cost of utilities when creating your monthly budget. Utilities companies may require small deposits.
- 🏠 Dorms or other on campus housing is automatically approved as a SILP. No Readiness Assessment or Physical Approval is needed.
- 🏠 If you are considering moving to another county or state, talk to your CSW/DPO and attorney before you make the move.
- 🏠 Keep your address current with your CSW/DPO so that you get your vouchers and payments.

## Rights & Responsibilities

### Right to Privacy

CSWs will respect your right to confidentiality as much as possible, but they still must follow certain rules. They will have to wear their county ID when they come to inspect your living space.

### Right to challenge a SILP denial

Make sure you understand the reason you are being denied and request a written explanation. Your CSW should explain the grievance process, and give you a form called the DCFS 123-C. Talk to your attorney to decide if you want to try to bring the issue up in court and have the Judge make the decision. You can call the Foster Youth Ombudsman at (877) 846-1602.

## Conflicts & Concerns

### What do I do if my CSW/DPO says I am not ready for a SILP?

Call your attorney to decide if you want to bring the issue up in court and have the Judge make the decision. Or, work with your CSW/DPO to create goals on your TILP that will get you ready.

### What if my SILP is not found to be safe?

Be at the inspection to learn if there are problems that can be fixed. Ask your landlord if he will fix them. Then, ask your CSW/DPO to schedule another inspection. If the problems cannot be fixed by the landlord, look for another SILP.

### What should I do if I don't get my SILP payment?

Call your CSW/DPO or (800) 697-4444 immediately. There may be a problem with the paperwork or voucher.

### What happens if I move?

Tell your CSW/DPO right away if you are planning on moving, and try to get a new SILP approved before moving in. If you have to move suddenly, your new SILP will need to be inspected within 10 calendar days to get your SILP payment on time. If you're away from your placement for 14 days without talking to your CSW, you may not get your SILP payment.

### Is there any other financial support available to me in a SILP?

You may be able to qualify for CalFresh (formerly Food Stamps), but ask for help with the application. If you are a parent, you may also qualify for additional money to take care of your baby. If you're receiving SILP payments, you do not qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

For more information, visit [kids-alliance.org](http://kids-alliance.org) or [clccal.org](http://clccal.org).